

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-15 PM-07 NSC-10 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 L-03 OMB-01

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APPROVED BY NEA:RPDAVIES

DOD/ISA - MR NOYES

NAVY OPO-6 - ADMIRAL WEYLANDER

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O 181857Z AUG 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

INFO USMTM DHAHRAN IMMEDIATE

CNO

USCINCEUR

SECDEF

S E C R E T STATE 164691

SECDEF FOR ISA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SA

SUBJ: SAUDI NAVAL EXPANSION PROGRAM (SNEP)

REF: USMTM'S 161020Z AUG 73

1. IN VIEW CONSIDERABLE EFFORT AND TIME SPENT OVER PAST YEARS TO DEVELOP SNEP, IT WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE IF WE WERE TO LOSE PROGRAM AT THIS STAGE AND PRINCE SULTAN SHOULD GO FORWARD WITH RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.

2. WE APPRECIATE PART OF PROBLEM IS THAT IN SEEKING TO BE RESPONSIVE TO DIFFERENT REQUESTS BY SAUDI NAVY FOR VARIOUS ADD-ONS, THIS HAS RESULTED IN CONTINUED PRICE ESCALATION

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WHICH MAY NOT HAVE BEEN CONVEYED IN SATISFACTORY DETAIL

TO PRINCE SULTAN BY HIS SUBORDINATES. WE BELIEVE IT IS THEREFORE MOST IMPORTANT THAT SULTAN RECEIVE A CAREFUL AND FULL EXPLANATION OF HOW THE 840 MILLION DOLLAR FIGURE WAS ARRIVED AT. WE ALSO BELIEVE IT MOST IMPORTANT THAT WE DISABUSE HIM OF ANY NOTION HE MIGHT HAVE THAT THERE ARE PRESSURES ON USG NOT TO PROVIDE SAG WITH NAVAL PRESENCE BY MAKING SAUDI NAVY TOO EXPENSIVE. SULTAN SHOULD BE ASSURED THAT SNEP CAN BE TAILORED DOWNWARD SIGNIFICANTLY AND STILL MEET SAUDI OBJECTIVE OF EVENTUALLY HAVING SMALL BUT MODERN AND WELL TRAINED NAVY.

3. AMBASSADOR SHOULD BE PRESENT AT AUGUST 22 MEETING WITH

SULTAN TO ENSURE ABOVE POINTS ARE MADE. MEANWHILE, WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT OF SULTAN'S ALLEGATIONS AND OF SERIOUSNESS OF SULTAN'S STATEMENT THAT HE PLANS RECOMMEND CANCELLATION OF SNEP.

4. WITH AMBASSADOR'S CONCURRENCE, NAVY PREPARED SEND REPS TO SAUDI ARABIA TO ATTEND AUGUST 22 MEETING WITH PRINCE SULTAN. THESE REPS WILL BE PREPARED TO PRESENT ALTERNATE PROPOSALS FOR SNEP RANGING FROM 596 TO 840 MILLION DOLLARS. PLEASE ADVISE IMMEDIATELY SINCE REPS MUST LEAVE WASHINGTON BY AUGUST 20. ROGERS

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NNN

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